



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

Last week, a group of Arizona tourism industry leaders and I joined 29 other states in Washington, D.C. for the 3rd Annual Travel Leadership Summit. We met with the Arizona congressional delegation to advocate on critical tourism issues, and in particular, discussed H.B. 3232 / S. 1661 known as the Travel Promotion Act (TPA).

While at the summit, the House of Representatives passed the TPA that would create a public-private partnership to communicate security policies and promote the United States as a premier tourist destination. This is an enormous achievement for the travel community. However, an uphill battle remains in the U.S. Senate and with the Bush Administration.

Also last week, members of our staff attended the Governor's Rural and Regional Development Conference held in Cave Creek/Carefree.

Tourism is the only industry that positively impacts each of Arizona's 15 counties and our industry's contribution to rural and regional economic development is critical to our state's economy.

By remaining innovative in our approach to helping our smaller communities sustain vibrant and healthy economies, we can also help them preserve their unique qualities that will be enjoyed for many generations to come.

To download presentations from the conference, visit www.azcommerce.com.

For more details on the Travel Promotion Act, please read the *Industry News* section below or visit www.tia.org.

Have a great week.



Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

We Need Your Landmark Events!

The Arizona Office of Tourism is seeking information on your special landmark events. If your community or local attractions will reach a significant anniversary (i.e. 50 years, 75 years, centennials, etc.) in the next few years and there are planned special events to celebrate those landmarks, we want to know about it. For instance, The Gallery in the Sun will celebrate Ted DeGrazia's centennial year in 2009. Please submit your event information to mmagnusson@azot.gov by October 10, 2008.

AOT's Research Section has been Updated

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- AZ Tourism Year End Summary 2007 [PDF](#)
- National Park Visitation June 2008 [PDF](#)
- Airport Passenger Traffic July 2008 [PDF](#)
- Airport Passenger Traffic 2nd Quarter 2008 [PDF](#)
- Gross Sales and Taxes July 2008 [PDF](#)
- Gross Sales and Taxes 2nd Quarter 2008 [PDF](#)
- Lodging Performance August 2008 [PDF](#)
- Lodging Performance August 2008 (By County) [PDF](#)
- State Park Visitation August 2008 [PDF](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Billings, Research Specialist, at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at bbillings@azot.gov.

Rural Tourism Development Grant Program Guidelines Now Available!

The Rural Tourism Development Grant Program (RTDGP) guidelines for FY09 are now available! The objective of this competitive grant program is to provide coordinated funding for tourism related infrastructure projects in rural communities throughout the state. The funding amount for FY09 is \$500,000. These funds assist rural economic development through tourism to strengthen the regional and local economies and expand tourism in rural and Tribal communities throughout Arizona. The primary function of the infrastructure project must be tourism development and the project must be designed to initiate economic growth and enhance future

tourism development. Eligible entities include not-for-profits, government organizations and tribal government.

New for FY09! Projects that contain an Arizona centennial component will receive priority funding. A detailed description of the criteria will be included in the FY09 guidelines and projects must comply with these guidelines to be considered a centennial project.

The FY09 RTDGP Guidelines define centennial projects as:

- Projects that include restoration of historic properties appropriate for use in the observance of the Arizona Centennial.
- Projects that provide a sense of unity and pride by accentuating the diverse nature of the State's tourist destinations.

Applications are available on AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov under the Grants section. Applications must be received by AOT no later than 5 p.m. **Wednesday, October 15, 2008.**

If you have any questions, please contact Glenn Schlottman, Tourism Education and Development Manager at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at gschlottman@azot.gov. For information on the Arizona Centennial please contact Karen Churchard at 602-364-4158 or via e-mail at kchurchard@azot.gov.

SAVE the DATE: ATU's Interactive Marketing Workshop

The Arizona Office of Tourism is proud to present Arizona Tourism University's complimentary workshop **Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle.**

The "Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle" workshop is an informative and in-depth look at four of the most common interactive / online marketing elements: Search, E-mail, Social and Analytics. Building upon the previous Arizona Tourism University workshop, 'How to Develop an Interactive Marketing Strategy,' this year's workshop will expand upon these 'Four Keys' to provide attendees with real-world examples, tips and tools that can be applied to their current interactive marketing campaigns.

Register now by contacting Meghan Dorn at 602-364-3708 or mdorn@azot.gov.

Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle will be held from **9:00 a.m. to Noon** in the following locations:

Tuesday, October, 28 – [White Stallion Ranch](#)

Thursday, October 30 – [Lowell Observatory](#)

Neither of these dates work with your schedule? Then take advantage of our new online opportunity!

This year, AOT is proud to introduce ATU Online. We will be offering all of our workshops over the Internet in the form of a webinar. These condensed versions will offer the same great information as the workshops. The inaugural class is **Thursday, November 6**. Be sure to register for the class!

Trippin' with AOT

Japan Sales Mission Opportunity

AOT, along with other Western States, will be hosting its annual week-long sales mission to Japan October 26 – October 31. The mission will involve trade presentations and meetings in Tokyo and Osaka, with a media presentation and luncheon in Tokyo.

Participation fees are as follows:

- Suppliers: \$700 per supplier
- DMOs: \$800 per DMO (plus travel).

For more information please contact Osamu Hoshino at ohoshino@comcast.net or 801-266-3345.

German Trade Show Opportunity

AOT would like to invite you to join us at International Tourismus Boerse (ITB), the largest travel industry trade show in the world. ITB will be held March 11–15, 2009 in Berlin, Germany. More than 1,000,000 trade visitors and 11,000 exhibitors from 180 countries are expected to attend. ITB is not an appointment show; however, Arizona's representatives in Germany do schedule appointments with German, Austrian and Swiss tour operators and media representatives.

Participation fees are as follows:

- Suppliers: \$2,000 for primary delegate and \$1,000 for the second delegate (plus travel).
- DMOs: \$2,500 for the primary delegate and \$1,000 for the second delegate (plus travel).

If you are interested in attending, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at lbelonio@azot.gov.

Industry News

Travel Promotion Bill Passes House

The House on Thursday passed H.R. 3232, the "Travel Promotion Act of 2008" on a voice vote. The legislation, which still must pass the Senate, establishes a public-private partnership to promote travel to the U.S. and communicate U.S. security and entry policies. The bill specifies that travel promotion would be paid for by private sector contributions and a fee on foreign travelers who do not pay \$131 for a visa to enter the U.S. Passage of the House version was hailed by the Travel Industry Association, which has been leading a lobbying effort to garner support for the legislation.

"The U.S. House of Representatives took decisive action today to jump-start America's struggling economy and create thousands of new jobs by passing the Travel Promotion Act," said Roger Dow, president and CEO of TIA. "We now call on the U.S. Senate to act quickly to reverse the decline in overseas visitation to the United States and utilize the power of travel to strengthen the American economy." (*Special to TA*)

Governor Announces Members of Centennial Commission

Last week, Governor Janet Napolitano announced her appointments for the Arizona Centennial Commission (AZCC). The Commission was established by executive order in February and is charged with planning a yearlong celebration for Arizona's 100th birthday, culminating on February 14, 2012.

Co-Chaired by the Governor and Retired Chief Justice Charles E. Jones, the Arizona Centennial Commission will oversee planning efforts to ensure communities and people throughout the state participate in the celebration and commemoration of Arizona's Centennial. In the coming months the Commission will develop a master plan that contains five major components:

- Generating awareness and engagement by providing a sense of unity and pride among residents
- Developing participation programs that include a robust yearlong calendar of activities to celebrate the Centennial
- In collaboration with the Arizona Historical Advisory Commission, implementing educational programs that focus on the state's past, present and future
- Supporting the Arizona Historical Advisory Commission's legacy projects, such as working with communities to highlight their unique historical value
- Establishing avenues for resources and funding to encourage and support planning at the state and local level for major events and activities

United States Senator Jon Kyl and former Arizona Governors are Honorary Chairs of the Commission. To best serve the interests of all Arizonans, members and ex-officio members were chosen to represent a cross-section of Arizona business leaders, local, state, federal and tribal elected officials, state agency directors, university presidents and non-profits leaders.

For more information, please visit www.azgovernor.gov.

AH&LA Study Finds U.S. Tourism Strong

In spite of the nation's lackluster economy, the U.S. lodging industry has recorded its best year ever, according to the American Hotel & Lodging Association, which this week released the results of its annual "Lodging Industry Profile." According to the study, American hotels posted \$28 billion in pre-tax profits in 2007 and \$139.4 billion in sales, up from \$26.6 billion and \$133.4 billion, respectively, in 2006. AH&LA partially credits the lodging industry's strong performance to a record-setting 56 million international visitors who came to the U.S. in 2007, a 10 percent increase over 2006. (www.MiMegasite.com, 9/23; *Special to TA*)

European Travel to U.S. Enjoying a Boom

Overall trans-Atlantic traffic to the U.S. soared in August (with the top nine airlines reporting an average increase of 9.6 percent, the largest monthly increase in the past 12 months) fueled by a boom in European travel to the U.S., according to the latest monthly report on European travel from Donald Martin & Co. Capacity was up an average 7.3 percent and the average load factor was 84.1 percent. But the dynamic, says DMC, is just the opposite for U.S. travel to Europe. The latest Department of Commerce figures for June show a 5.3 percent drop in American visits to Europe for a fourth consecutive month of decline. DMC said the current financial crisis undermines hope for a fall pickup in U.S. travel to Europe, which seemed possible only days ago with airfares down as much as 40 percent from summer highs, and the dollar surging 13 percent against the euro in late summer. (www.travelpulse.com, 9/25)

TIA President to Speak in Phoenix October 22, 2008

Roger Dow, President & CEO of the Travel Industry Association and former SVP Global Sales for Marriott, will share insights on the relatively unknown fact that the world pie of global travel is rapidly growing, while America's slice is shrinking. The negative impact on the U.S. economy since 2000 has been \$137 billion and 229,000 jobs. Combine this with the U.S. domestic air

travel system in crisis and the outlook is not encouraging for business. In his presentation, “American’s ‘on sale’ – so why aren’t overseas travelers beating down our doors,” Mr. Dow will discuss current market conditions, future travel industry trends and what can be done to turn the situation around. With travel and tourism being such a major part of Arizona’s economy and affecting so many businesses, you won’t want to miss this!

The presentation, sponsored by the Economic Club of Phoenix, will be at the Arizona Biltmore, Wednesday, October 22. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. with the program beginning at noon. For more information, visit <http://wpcarey.asu.edu/ecp/>.

Staycations: Get the Facts and More at TIA’s Marketing Outlook Forum

The Staycations being planned by U.S. travelers this year may be homebased, but they certainly are not homebound. Additionally, the economy and other factors are not keeping as many people home as anticipated. According to a recent survey of 2,231 U.S. adults, 75 percent said that they are planning a leisure trip during the next six months, while only nine percent said that they are planning staycations over the same period. But of those staying local, nearly 25 percent are planning to stay at a hotel, motel or resort during their staycations and will likely become backyard tourists, visiting nearby sites, theme parks and other attractions. These results from the Travel Industry Association/Ypartnership travelhorizons survey is a preview of the valuable information that will be presented during TIA’s Marketing Outlook Forum on October 27-30, 2008 in Portland, Oregon.

During two full days, more than 50 of the travel industry’s leaders will address changes in the travel, offer predictions about the future, and provide practical insight in where to look for new markets of opportunity. Plus, all attendees will receive free admittance to two professional development workshops being conducted by the Walt Disney Parks and Resorts research team on October 30. An early bird registration rate is available through September 12. For the complete schedule and to register, go to www.tia.org/mof.